

EXPOSING RACISM

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 18, 1999

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi Mr. Speaker, since the beginning of March, I have introduced articles into the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD to document the continued effects racism and discrimination are having on our nation. Although the killings of James Byrd in Jasper, TX, and Isaiah Shoels in Littleton, CO have painfully thrust the acts of overt, violent racists into the national spotlight, the articles I have entered into the RECORD will show, if they do not already, that we can not sit by silently while this cancer grows unchecked.

The origins of our great nation were nascent with promises of freedom, justice, and equality under the law. However, for more than 200 years, the enslavement of Africans and then Jim Crow laws obfuscated our task—our obligation—to make America “one nation under God.” We were blinded to the veracity of inspirational phrases like, “with freedom and justice for all,” “all men are created equal,” and “Epluribus Unim”—from the many one.

However, during the civil rights movement, many brave Americans of all races stepped forward to denounce the laws and systemic bigotry that perpetuated an American version of apartheid. They walked, marched, and “sat-in” in an attempt to reclaim the legacy promised to all of us by our founding fathers. One such person was Linda Brown. In 1951, this little girl was in the third grade. Although there was an elementary school seven blocks from her house, young Linda was forced to walk over a mile to another elementary school. The reason to make a little girl walk through a railroad switch yard on her way to school? She was black and the school located seven blocks from her house was for white students only.

Many years ago, George Santayana wrote, “Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it.” Because I revere the warning contained in these prescient words, today I am introducing a resolution to recognize the 45th anniversary of the Supreme Court’s decision in Brown versus Board of Education. In 1954, the U.S. Supreme Court, in a unanimous decision, boldly struck down segregation laws in public schools and upheld the equal protection laws guaranteed to all Americans by the 14th amendment to the U.S. Constitution.

However, in the aftermath of that historic decision, many of the freedoms won by the Brown decision have been rolled back or are currently under assault. White flight and a conspicuous attack on our public schools have facilitated the de facto resegregation of our public schools. All of the lessons we should have learned from this important event in our shared American history, seem to be once again eluding us.

I respectfully submit this legislation to remind us all that we have a moral obligation to purge the divisive evil of racism out of the fabric of harmony, justice, and equality that is our shared American legacy. We have a responsibility to not only remember the past, but to learn from it.

If in fact, “those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it,” then Mr. Speaker, I pray that my efforts to document racism in America and to remind our nation of the significance of the Brown versus the Board of Education, wake us from our collective slumber to experience the beauty of our shared destiny.

A TRIBUTE TO MR. NAT GLASS,
HOLOCAUST SURVIVOR AND
COMMUNITY VOLUNTEER

HON. CARRIE P. MECK

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 18, 1999

Mrs. Meek of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Mr. Nat Glass, a survivor of the Holocaust in Poland and, today, a volunteer lecturer at the Holocaust Memorial in Miami Beach, Florida. Mr. Glass was a student in Poland when the Nazis invaded his country in the pre-dawn of September 1, 1939, the event which ushered in World War II.

In his lectures today at the Holocaust Memorial, Mr. Glass relates how the Nazis created Jewish ghettos, in which the Jewish people were forced into labor for their invaders. In September, 1944, Mr. Glass and his family were packed into cattle cars and shipped to Auschwitz. There, he saw his mother and two sisters for the last time. Mr. Glass later learned that they died of starvation at the Stutthof concentration camp.

Mr. Glass was sold as a slave and sent to Germany, where he worked in a factory. In early May 1945, the laborers were told to dig their own graves. As they were about to be executed, the American Army liberated the factory.

Today, Mr. Nat Glass sees it as his mission to volunteer and to share his story of tragedy, because he has seen what hate can do.

Mr. Speaker, it is a privilege to pay tribute to Mr. Nat Glass, a man who has overcome evil with good.

A TRIBUTE TO CONNIE
LOUDERBACK AND MEMBERS OF
THE GOLDEN, ILLINOIS HISTORICAL
SOCIETY

HON. JOHN SHIMKUS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 18, 1999

Mr. SHIMKUS. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate Connie Loudermilk and the Golden, Illinois Historical Society for their efforts to preserve Prairie Mills in Golden.

Prairie Mills was built by Henry R. Emming in 1872. It operated for 60 years and served as a key component of Golden and the surrounding area. Today, it serves perhaps an even more important role as a reminder of the way things used to be.

Connie Loudermilk, Randy Kurfman and other members of the Golden Historical Society are working very hard to raise funds and

awareness to help preserve the mill and enhance its prospects for the future.

I want to commend Connie and Randy as well as Jim Simpson, Dave Weese, Bob Teel, Ben Booth and all the other volunteers involved in this worthwhile effort. I also want to thank the Illinois Country Living magazine for featuring Prairie Mills and the Society’s efforts in its January 1999 edition.

The efforts they are making will last for generations to come.

THE VIEW FROM ROMANIA

HON. DOUG BEREUTER

OF NEBRASKA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 18, 1999

Mr. BEREUTER. Mr. Speaker, this Member commends to his colleagues an excellent article which appeared in the Los Angeles Times on May 10, 1999, calling for NATO to halt the bombing of Yugoslavia and to declare a cease-fire, lest NATO become its own nemesis.

[From the Los Angeles Times, May 10, 1999]

THE VIEW FROM ROMANIA

BOMBING BY NATO, AN ALLIANCE IN WHICH WE HAVE SO MUCH FAITH, ENSURES WRONG RESULTS WHILE ABANDONING FUNDAMENTAL PRECEPTS

(By Adrian Nastase)

Romanians have a message for NATO—one that is decidedly pro-NATO, but also may be unpleasant. It is a message of “tough love.”

Halt the bombing of Yugoslavia and declare a cease-fire. Negotiations must be relaunched without any prior conditions on either side, taking into account the tragic evolution of events that has already occurred on the ground.

As an applicant for NATO membership and member of the Partnership for Peace, Romania has opened its air space to alliance aircraft. We are fully supportive of an embargo that pressures Belgrade to cease its actions in Kosovo. We are adamant that Kosovar Albanians should be allowed to return to their homes with their rights guaranteed. War crimes should be investigated and prosecuted.

But, most Romanians now think that the use of force, including the long-term continuation of airstrikes or any forcible ground intervention, will lose everything NATO seeks.

Kosovo will be destroyed; Slobodan Milosevic will remain in power as a wartime leader reinforced by a siege mentality; Macedonia and Albania will be destabilized by refugees and foreign military presence, and anti-Americanism will rise to fever proportions in Greece, Italy and elsewhere.

We want NATO to win politically and morally. We want peace to be ensured by a great alliance and its strongest members. We want dictators to be removed by popular action, and minority rights preserved by diplomacy, incentives and law.

Romanians dream about becoming part of NATO. Our dream has been to enter an alliance that occupies a moral high ground, not one that, by mistake, kills refugees and civilians. We believe that the alliance’s principles have mattered. For years during the communist period, Romania rejected intervention in sovereign states and distanced itself from the Soviet-dominated Warsaw